

Africa RISING

Sustainable Intensification of Key Farming Systems in the Sudano-Sahelian Zone of West Africa: Progress Narrative/ technical report for the Rice-based component

Africa Rice Center

March 2012

- **General Progress:** Describe the general progress of the work plan and deliverables, including where the planned work is progressed as expected, where it is not, whether the work plan is still on track to complete expected deliverables, and if not, what proposed modifications are contemplated.

AfricaRice and its national partners actively participated in the following project design and planning meetings:

- Project design workshop, Tamale, 9-12 January, 2012
- Consultation meeting between AfricaRice and the Savannah Agricultural Research Institute, the lead national partner, Tamale, 9-10 February, 2012.
- Maize-based systems component stakeholders' workshop, Tamale, 28-29 March, 2012.
- Rice-based systems component project inception workshop, Tamale, 12 April, 2012.

The rice-based systems component stakeholders have agreed on: the logframe indicating the outcomes, outputs and activities up to September 2012, project sites, project implementation partners, their roles and responsibilities, protocols for baseline, diagnostic and yield gap surveys, nutrient manager validation, multi-stakeholder platform establishment and community seed production, as well as milestones and timelines for the seven activities identified for 2012.

AfricaRice trained Ghanaian partners on yield gap (2 trainees) and diagnostic (2 trainees) surveys in Cotonou, 13-17 February, 2012.

Partners that will produce seed under the project as well as sources of foundation seed for multiplication were identified.

The sub-agreement between IITA and AfricaRice as well as those between AfricaRice and its implementation partners (SARI and the World Vegetable Research and Development Center - AVRDC) were signed and funds were transferred accordingly.

- **Key Deliverable Deviation:** If specific key deliverables were not met according to the proposed plan, briefly discuss the reasons they deviated and the proposed corrective actions.

All the activities listed in the logframe have been started. However, all started late because of the many uncertainties about the project and its implementation. Related to this, the activities could not start until agreements had been signed by the implementation partners. Now that the agreements have been signed and funds transferred, these activities will be conducted fully.

- **Course Correction:** Whether or not you are on track to meet key deliverables, with the benefit of current experience, are there any modifications you would propose to the work plan and deliverables?

It is more realistic to set a completion date of September for most of the activities only the inception workshop, baseline and diagnostic surveys can be completed earlier than September, 2012. The yield gap survey and Multistakeholder platforms establishment, operation and assessment will not be completed until 2013.

- **Plans for Next Reporting Period:** To the extent that you have proposed modifications to any of the activities identified in the deliverables, identify why modification of these activities will still lead to achievement of the deliverables, and how your organization will be able to successfully achieve the deliverables as modified.

The only modifications are in the timelines for completion. The new timelines are more realistic and achievable.

- **Risks:** Are you aware of any significant risks or concerns that have not previously been identified, and that may affect your organization's ability to achieve the agreed-on deliverables? If so, indicate how your organization is addressing those risks.

The frequent modifications of the entire project by the donor has given cause for some concern

- **Sustainability:** If your organization intends for this project to be sustained after the grant period has ended, what actions have your organization and project partners taken and what actions will you be taking to facilitate sustainability, and how will the project be continued?

Sustainability of the project's activities will be assured because their implementation is being linked, through the establishment of rice sector development hubs, to the Ghana national rice development strategy as well as other donor-funded rice value chain development projects in the project intervention areas. Successful intervention in the project sites will be up- and out-scaled by development agencies and the private sector (who are part of this project) to other areas not covered by the project.

- **Scalability:** If your organization intends for this project to increase in scale after the grant period has ended, what actions have your organization and project partners taken and what actions will you be taking to facilitate that increase in scale?

Successful intervention in the project sites will be up- and out-scaled by development agencies and the private sector (who are part of this project) to other areas not covered by the project.

- **Lessons Learned:** What lessons have you learned during the past year that will help you to achieve your intended results moving forward?

The interest and commitment of the stakeholders in this project, including the government of Ghana, have been amazing and the project will build on this. The importance of effective communication and inclusiveness of all stakeholders for successful project implementation have also become clearer and will be a guiding principle.